

Col. John M. Kemper Gets Legion of Merit For Historical Work

Col. John M. Kemper, 32, of 3105 Thirty-third place N.W., has been awarded the Legion of Merit for his services from July 19, 1943, to February 12, 1945, as chief of the historical branch of the Army Military Intelligence Division. Col. Kemper recently left for overseas duty.

"He was instrumental in the creation and development of a central agency within the War Department responsible for the formulation of basic War Department historical policies," the citation said. "As a result of his rare foresight, imagination, sound judgment and untiring efforts, a solid basis was established for writing and history of the present war."

A native of Wyoming, Col. Kemper was graduated from West Point in 1935. He was stationed here from June, 1943, until he left for overseas duty several weeks ago. Col. Kemper's wife, Mrs. Sylvia Kemper, and their two daughters, Cecily, 6, and Lucy, 4, live at the Thirty-third place address.

Maj. Fred S. Poorman, 43, acting chief of the military construction branch in the office of the chief engineer at the War Department, was presented the Legion of Merit yesterday for developing a revolutionary gunnery training range.

Combat experience gained up to the fall of 1943 had made it extremely desirable to change radically and improve flexible gunnery technique and instruction, the citation explains.

"Suitable facilities for proper training appeared impracticable of attainment until . . . he conceived and, through his untiring efforts . . . ability and careful supervision, designed, built and perfected an entirely revolutionary range which permits reproducing the essential features of flexible gunnery aerial combat problems under conditions which permit positive instruction," the citation states.

Maj. Poorman was commissioned in December, 1942, and has been stationed here since. Before he was commissioned he was a civil service employee engaged in the type of work he is now doing. Maj. Poorman was the assistant chief engineer on the Pennsylvania turnpike. A native of Ohio, Maj. Poorman and his wife live at 2407 Fifteenth street.

Marine Lt. Col. Austin R. Brunelli, 37, of 6124 Thirty-second street N.W., was awarded the Silver Star Medal en route to Iwo Jima for voluntarily leading an assault battalion and making personal reconnaissance under fire during the battle for Saipan.

The citation said that Col. Brunelli, although serving as regimental executive officer on Saipan, took command of an infantry battalion when it lost its leader in an artillery barrage. He was frequently in the front lines, encouraging his men and directing their efforts.

"When two of his companions were forced to withdraw a short distance from the assigned objective, Col. Brunelli made a personal reconnaissance under fire and skillfully re-established his line to assure success of the day's operations," the citation states.

A week later his battalion was ordered to fill a dangerous gap between two units. Col. Brunelli again made a reconnaissance under fire, enabling his battalion to move into a position and accomplish its mission.

Col. Brunelli also wears the Legion of Merit for his services as a battalion commander during the battle for Namur in the Marshalls and the Purple Heart for wounds also received at Namur.

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